

archetype (ar' kĕtĭp): 18; 322.

argument (in narrative forms): 111.

art for art's sake: 6; 73.

article: 116.

aside, the: 369; 64, 66.

assonance (ă' sōnāns): 12.

atmosphere: "Atmosphere" is the emotional tone pervading a section or the whole of a literary work, which fosters in the reader expectations as to the course of events, whether happy or (more commonly) terrifying or disastrous. Shakespeare establishes the tense and fearful atmosphere at the beginning of *Hamlet* by the terse and nervous dialogue of the sentinels as they anticipate a reappearance of the ghost; Coleridge engenders a compound of religious and superstitious terror by his description of the initial scene in the narrative poem *Christabel* (1816); and Hardy in his novel *The Return of the Native* (1878) makes Egdon Heath a brooding presence that reduces to pettiness and futility the human struggle for happiness for which it is the setting. Alternative terms frequently used for atmosphere are **mood** and the French word **ambiance**.

For references to *atmosphere* in other entries, see page 152.

aubade (ō bād'): 229.

Augustan Age (awgŭs' tan): 282.

author and authorship: The conception of an author in ordinary literary discourse can be summarized as follows: **authors** are individuals who, by their intellectual and imaginative powers, purposefully create from their experience and reading a literary work which is distinctively their own. The work itself, as distinguished from the written or printed texts that instantiate the work, remains a product accredited to the author as its originator, even if he or she turns over the rights to publish and profit from the texts to someone else. And insofar as the literary work turns out to be great and original, the author who has composed that work is deservedly accorded high cultural status and achieves lasting fame.

Since the 1960s, this way of conceiving an author has been put to radical question by a number of structural and poststructural theorists, who posit the human *subject* not as an originator and shaper of a work but as a "space" in which conventions, codes, and circulating locutions precipitate into a particular text, or else as a "site" wherein there converge, and are recorded, the cultural constructs, discursive formations, and configurations of power prevalent in a given cultural era. The author is said to be the product, rather than the

producer, of a text or is redescribed as an "effect" or "function" engendered by the internal play of textual language. Famously, in 1968 Roland Barthes proclaimed and celebrated "The Death of the Author," whom he described as a figure invented by critical discourse in order to set limits to the inherent free play of the meanings in reading a literary text. See under *structuralist criticism* and *poststructuralism*.

In an influential essay, "What Is an Author?" written in 1969, Michel Foucault raised the question of the historical "coming into being of the notion of 'author'"—that is, of the emergence and evolution of the "author function" within the discourse of our culture. The investigation would include such inquiries as "how the author became individualized," "what status he has been given," what "system of valorization" involves the author, and how the fundamental category of " 'the-man-and-his-work criticism' began." Foucault's essay and example gave impetus to a number of studies, which reject the notion that the prevailing concept of **authorship** (the set of attributes possessed by an author) is either natural or necessitated by the way things are. Instead, historicists conceive authorship to be a *cultural construct* that emerged and changed drastically, in accordance with changing economic conditions, social circumstances, and institutional arrangements for the writing and distribution of books, over many centuries in the Western world. See *new historicism*.

Cultural historians have emphasized the important role, in constructing and reconstructing the concept of an author, of such historical developments as the following:

1. The shift from an oral to a literate culture. In the former, the identity of an author presumably was not inquired after, since the individual bard or minstrel improvised by reference to inherited subject matter, forms, and literary formulae. (See *oral poetry*.) In a culture where at least a substantial segment of the population can read, the production of enduring texts in the form of written scrolls and manuscripts generated increasing interest in the individual responsible for producing the work that was thus recorded. Many works in manuscript, however, were circulated freely and were often altered in transcriptions, with little regard to the intentions or formulations of the originator of the work.
2. The shift, in the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, from a primarily manuscript culture to a primarily print culture. (See *book*.) The invention of printing greatly expedited the manufacture and dissemination of printed texts and so multiplied the number of producers of literary works, and made financially important the specification of the identity and ability of an individual writer, in order to invite support for that individual by the contemporary system of aristocratic and noble patronage. Foucault, in addition, proposed the importance of a punitive function in fostering the concept of an author's responsibility in originating a work, which served the interests of the state in affixing on a particular individual the blame for transgressive or subversive ideas.

3. The emphasis in more recent research on the difficulties in establishing, in various periods, just who was the originator of what parts of an existing literary text, which was often, in effect, the product of multiple collaborators, censors, editors, printers, and publishers, as well as of successive revisions by the reputed author. See *multiple authorship* under *textual criticism*.
4. The proliferation of middle-class readers in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the attendant explosion in the number of literary titles printed and in the number of writers required to supply this market. Both Foucault and Barthes, in the essays cited earlier, emphasized that the modern concept of an author as an individual who is the intellectual owner of his or her literary product was the result of the *ideology* engendered by the emerging capitalist economy in this era. Other scholars have stressed the importance of the shift during the eighteenth century, first in England and then in other European countries, from a reliance by writers on literary patrons to that of support by payments from publishers and booksellers. A result of the booming literary market was the increasingly successful appeal by writers for copyright laws that would invest them, instead of the publisher, with the ownership of the works that they composed for public sale. These conditions of the literary marketplace fostered the claims by writers that they possessed originality, creativity, and genius and so were able to produce literary works that were entirely new. They made such claims in order to establish their legal rights, as authors, to ownership of such productions as their "intellectual property," in addition to their rights (which they could sell to others) to the printed texts of their works as "material property." Historians of authorship point out that the most emphatic claims about the genius, creativity, and originality of authors, which occurred in the *Romantic Period*, coincided with, and were interactive with, the success of authors in achieving some form of copyright protection of an author's proprietary rights to the literary work as the unique product of his or her native powers. See Mark Rose, *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright* (1993); Martha Woodmansee, *The Author, Art, and the Market: Rereading the History of Aesthetics* (1994); and the essays by various scholars in *The Construction of Authorship: Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature*, eds. Martha Woodmansee and Peter Jaszi (1994). Paulina Kewes' *Authorship and Appropriation: Writing for the Stage in England, 1660-1710* (1998) is a study of the cultural and economic factors that determined the status of an author in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Historicist scholars of authorship have succeeded in demonstrating that there has been a sustained interplay between the economic circumstances and institutional arrangements for producing and marketing literary texts and some aspects of the conception of authorship, or of ideas associated with authorship. The radical further claim, however, that the modern figure and functions assigned to an author are in their essentials a recent formation, resulting from the distinctive conditions of the literary marketplace after the

seventeenth century, does not jibe with historical evidence. Some 2,000 years ago, for example, the Roman poet Horace wrote his verse-epistle, the *Ars Poetica*, at a time when books consisted of texts copied by hand in rolls of *papyrus*. (See the entry *book*.) Horace adverts to a number of individuals from Homer to his friend Virgil who, he makes clear, are individuals who conceived and brought their works into being and thus are responsible for having achieved their specific content, form, and quality. A competent literary author—Horace refers to him variously as *scriptor* (writer), *poeta* (maker), and *carminis auctor* (originator of a poem)—must possess a natural talent or genius (*ingenium*) as well as an acquired art; this author purposefully designs and orders his *poema* in such a way as to evoke the emotions of his audience. The bookseller, Horace indicates, advertises his commodities locally and also ships them abroad. And if a published work succeeds in instructing and giving pleasure to a great many readers, it is a book that not only “makes money for the bookseller” but also “crosses the sea and spreads to a distant age the fame of its author.” Clearly, Horace distinguishes between material and authorial, or intellectual, ownership, in that the author, even if he retains no proprietary interest in a published book, retains the sole responsibility and credit for having accomplished the work that the text incorporates. (See M. H. Abrams, “What Is a Humanistic Criticism?” in *The Fourth Dimension of a Poem*, 2012.)

Another revealing instance is provided by the publication of the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays in 1623. As writings intended for the commercial theater, Shakespeare's plays were a collaborative enterprise in which textual changes and insertions could be made by various hands at all stages of production; the resulting products were not Shakespeare's property but that of his theatrical company. Furthermore, as Stephen Greenblatt remarks in the Introduction to *The Norton Shakespeare* (1997), there is no evidence that Shakespeare himself wanted to have his plays printed, that he took any “interest in asserting authorial rights over a script,” or that he had any legal standing from which to claim such rights. Nonetheless, as Greenblatt points out, seven years after Shakespeare's death his friends and fellow actors Heminges and Condell were confident that they could sell their expensive *folio* collection of his plays by virtue of the fact, as they claimed in a preface, that their printed texts were exactly “as he conceived them” and represented what he himself had “thought” and “uttered.” The identity of the conceiver of the plays, serving to attest to the authenticity of the printed versions, is graphically represented by an engraved portrait of Shakespeare by Martin Droeshout in the front matter. The First Folio also included a poem by Ben Jonson, Shakespeare's friend and dramatic rival, “To the Memory of My Beloved, The Author Mr. William Shakespeare.” In it Jonson appraised Shakespeare as the equal of the Greek tragic dramatists Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles; lauded him as not only “The applause! delight! the wonder of our stage!” but also as an individual who, by the products of his innate abilities (“nature”) even more than his “art,” was “not of an age, but for all time!”; and asserted that his “well-turned” lines reflect the “mind, and manners” of the poet who had fathered them. It would seem that, in broad outline, the figure and functions

of Horace's "auctor" and of Jonson's "author" were essentially what they are at the present time in ordinary critical discourse.

See also the entries on *sociology of literature* and *hypertext*. In addition to the items listed above, refer to Frederick G. Kenyon, *Books and Readers in Ancient Rome* (1951); A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship* (1984); Wendy Wall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (1993). Roger Chartier, in "Figures of the Author," *The Order of Books* (1994), describes the diverse functions assigned to an individual author from the late Middle Ages through the eighteenth century.

authoritative (narration): 301.

authorship: 24.

autobiography: 30.

automatic writing: 227; 391.

avant-garde (ă' vön-gard''): 227.

B

ballad: A short definition of the **popular ballad** (also called the **folk ballad** or **traditional ballad**) is that it is a song, transmitted orally, which tells a story. Ballads are thus the narrative species of *folk songs*, which originate, and are communicated orally, among illiterate or only partly literate people. In all probability the initial version of a ballad was composed by a single author, but he or she is unknown; and since each singer who learns and repeats an oral ballad is apt to introduce changes in both the text and the tune, it exists in many variant forms. Typically, the popular ballad is dramatic, condensed, and impersonal: the narrator begins with the climactic episode, tells the story tersely in action and dialogue (sometimes by means of dialogue alone), and tells it without self-reference or the expression of personal attitudes or feelings.

The most common stanza form—called the **ballad stanza**—is a *quatrain* in alternate four- and three-stress lines; usually only the second and fourth lines rhyme. This is the form of “Sir Patrick Spens”; the first stanza also exemplifies the abrupt opening of the typical ballad and the manner of proceeding by third-person narration, curtly sketched setting and action, sharp transition, and spare dialogue:

The king sits in Dumferling towne,
Drinking the blude-red wine:
“O whar will I get a guid sailor,
To sail this schip of mine?”

Many ballads employ set formulas (which helped the singer remember the course of the song) including (1) stock descriptive phrases like “blood-red wine” and “milk-white steed,” (2) a *refrain* in each stanza (“Edward,” “Lord Randall”), and (3) **incremental repetition**, in which a line or stanza is repeated, but with an addition that advances the story (“Lord Randall,” “Child Waters”). See *oral poetry*.

Although many traditional ballads probably originated in the later Middle Ages, they were not collected and printed until the eighteenth century, first in England, then in Germany. In 1765, Thomas Percy published his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, which, although most of the contents had been revised in the style of Percy’s era, did much to inaugurate widespread interest in folk literature. The basic modern collection is Francis J. Child’s *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (1882–98), which includes 305 ballads, many of them in variant versions. Bertrand H. Bronson has edited *The Traditional Tunes of the Child Ballads* (4 vols., 1959–72). Popular ballads are still being sung in the British Isles and in remote rural areas of the United States. To the songs that early settlers brought with them from Great Britain, America has added native forms of the ballad, such as those sung by lumberjacks, cowboys, laborers, and social protesters. A number of twentieth-century folk singers, including Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, and Simon and Garfunkel, adapted or even composed ballads; most of these, however, such as “The Ballad of

Bonnie and Clyde" (about a notorious gangster and his moll), are closer to the journalistic "broadside ballad" than to the archaic and heroic mode of the popular ballads in the Child collection.

A **broadside ballad** is a ballad that was printed on one side of a single sheet (called a "broadside"), dealt with a current event or person or issue, and was sung to a well-known tune. Beginning with the sixteenth century, these broadsides were hawked in the streets or at country fairs in Great Britain.

The traditional ballad has greatly influenced the form and style of lyric poetry in general. It has also engendered the **literary ballad**, which is a narrative poem written in deliberate imitation of the form, language, and spirit of the traditional ballad. In Germany, some major literary ballads were composed in the latter eighteenth century, including G. A. Bürger's very popular "Lenore" (1774)—which soon became widely read and influential in an English translation—and Goethe's "Erlkönig" (1782). In England, some of the best literary ballads were composed in the *Romantic Period*: Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (which, however, is much longer and has a much more elaborate plot than the folk ballad), Walter Scott's "Proud Maisie," and Keats' "La Belle Dame sans Merci." In his *Lyrical Ballads* of 1798, Wordsworth begins "We Are Seven" by introducing a narrator as an agent and first-person teller of the story—"I met a little cottage girl"—which is probably one reason he called the collection "lyrical ballads." Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," on the other hand, of which the first version also appeared in *Lyrical Ballads*, opens with the abrupt and impersonal third-person narration of the traditional ballad:

It is an ancient Mariner
And he stoppeth one of three....

See John A. and Alan Lomax, *American Ballads and Folk Songs* (1934); W. J. Entwistle, *European Balladry* (rev. ed., 1951); M. J. C. Hodgart, *The Ballads* (2nd ed., 1962); D. C. Fowler, *A Literary History of the Popular Ballad* (1968). For the broadside ballad see *The Common Muse*, eds. V. de Sola Pinto and Allan E. Rodway (1957).

ballad stanza: 25.

bard: A term of Gaelic provenance, appearing in English in the mid-fifteenth century as a name for the professional poets who operated in the Celtic societies of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany, often in the employ of a noble patron for whose achievements they provided poetic commemoration. In Ireland, bards constituted a learned, professional, and hereditary class charged with maintaining an oral history from generation to generation. The bardic tradition ended in the thirteenth century in Wales, the mid-seventeenth century in Ireland, and the mid-eighteenth century in Scotland. The concept of the bard reappeared, however, in the context of various *Celtic revival* movements, where it was often associated with the doomed romantic protest of an ancient culture facing a conquering power. Thomas Gray's "The Bard. A Pindaric Ode" (1757) is composed in the passionate and heroic language of a Welsh

poet condemning the Norman king Edward I, the conqueror of Wales; the poem ends with the bard leaping to his death from a mountaintop.

Over time, the term has been applied to any poet of special distinction. Thus, Shakespeare has been described as "the Bard of Avon," Wordsworth as "the Bard of Rydal Mount," and Robert Burns as "the Bard of Ayrshire."

See Donald Wesling, "Difficulties of the Bardic: Literature and the Human Voice," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 8:1 (1981), pp. 69–81; and James Mulholland, "Gray's Ambition: Printed Voices and Performing Bards in the Later Poetry," *English Literary History*, Vol. 75:1 (2008), pp. 109–34.

baroque (ba rōk'): A term applied by art historians (at first derogatorily, but now merely descriptively) to a style of architecture, sculpture, and painting that emerged in Italy at the beginning of the seventeenth century and then spread to Germany and other countries in Europe. The style employs the classical forms of the *Renaissance* but breaks them up and intermingles them to achieve elaborate, grandiose, energetic, and highly dramatic effects. Major examples of baroque art are the sculptures of Bernini and the architecture of St. Peter's cathedral in Rome.

The term has been adopted with reference to literature, with a variety of applications. It may signify any elaborately formal and magniloquent style in verse or prose—for example, some verse passages in Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) and Thomas De Quincey's prose descriptions of his dreams in *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1822) have both been called baroque. Occasionally—though oftener on the Continent than in England—it serves as a period term for post-Renaissance literature in the seventeenth century. More frequently it is applied specifically to the elaborate verses and extravagant conceits of the late sixteenth-century and early seventeenth-century poets Giambattista Marino in Italy and Luis de Góngora in Spain. In English literature, the metaphysical poems of John Donne are sometimes described as baroque; but the term is more often, and more appropriately, applied to the elaborate style, fantastic conceits, and extreme religious emotionalism of the poet Richard Crashaw (1612–49); see under *metaphysical conceit*. Refer to René Wellek, "The Concept of Baroque in Literary Scholarship," in *Concepts of Criticism* (1963).

The term "baroque" is derived from the Spanish and Portuguese name for a pearl that is rough and irregular in shape.

bathos and anticlimax: **Bathos** is Greek for "depth," and it has been an indispensable term to critics since Alexander Pope, *parodying* the Greek Longinus' famous essay *On the Sublime* (that is, "loftiness"), wrote in 1727 an essay *On Bathos: Of the Art of Sinking in Poetry*. With mock solemnity, Pope assures his readers that he undertakes "to lead them as it were by the hand . . . the gentle downhill way to Bathos; the bottom, the end, the central point, the *non plus ultra*, of true Modern Poesy!" The word ever since has been used for an unintentional descent in literature when, straining to be pathetic or passionate or elevated, the writer overshoots the mark and drops into the trivial or the